

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 222102

FOL RPT MAPUTO 1129 ACTION SECSTATE INFO DAR ES SALAAM
LONDON LUSAKA PRETORIA LAGOS 15 SEP 77 QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MAPUTO 1129

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: RH, UK, US

SUBJECT: RHODESIAN PROPOSAL

REF: STATE 218697

1. SUMMARY. IN MEETING WITH ROBERT MUGABE SEPTEMBER 14, I APPRISED HIM OF UK/US DESIRE TO OBTAIN EARLY SECURITY COUNCIL APPROVAL FOR DESIGNATION OF A UN REPRESENTATIVE. BELIEVE MY PRESENTATION DISPEELED SOME (BUT NOT ALL) HIS DOUBTS THAT DESIGNATION OF A UN REPRESENTATION IMPLIES SOME FORM OF COMMITMENT TO THE PROPOSAL ITSELF, WHICH HE IS NOT PREPARED TO GIVE. END SUMMARY.

2. I SAW ROBERT MUGABE FOR HALF HOUR YESTERDAY AFTERNOON. SIMON MUZENDA, MUKUDZEI MUDZI AND A NOTE-TAKER WERE PRESENT. EMBASSY POLITICAL OFFICER DOUGLAS SMITH ACCOMPANIED ME.

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3. HAVING BEEN TOLD EARLIER THAT MUGABE WOULD BE ABLE TO SPARE ONLY TEN MINUTES, I STATED THAT PURPOSE OF MY VISIT WAS TO APPRISE HIM OF UK AND US INTENTION TO SEEK EARLY SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING TO OBTAIN APPROVAL FOR DESIGNATION OF A UN RPRESENTATIVE TO PERMIT COMMENCEMENT OF NEGOTIATIONS REGARDING MILITARY ARRANGEMENTS DURING THE TRANSITIONAL PERIOD. I SAID THAT WE DESIRED AN EARLY

DESIGNATION OF A UN REPRESENTATION SO AS TO KEEP PRESSURE ON SMITH AND TO LESSEN PROSPECTS THAT HE AND OTHERS WOULD OPT FOR AN INTERNAL SETTLEMENT. I STRESSED THAT THE DESIGNATION OF THE UN REPRESENTATIVE WOULD IN NO WAY ENTAIL COMMITMENT ON PART OF PATRIOTIC FRONT TO UK-US PROPOSAL AS A WHOLE OR TO ANY PART OF IT.

4. MUGABE LISTENED ATTENTIVELY, GAVE IMPRESSION THAT UK/US DESIRE TO CONVENE AN EARLY MEETING OF SECURITY COUNCIL WAS NEWS TO HIM. HIS INITIAL REACTION WAS TO OBSERVE THAT DESIGNATION OF A UN PRESENTATIVE WOULD IMPLY ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROPOSAL, WHICH HE SAID THE PATRIOTIC FRONT WAS NOT PREPARED TO GIVE. I TRIED AS BEST I COULD BE DISPELL THE DOUBTS, AND BELIEVE I HAD SOME SUCCESS. HOWEVER, MUGABE GAVE NO INDICATION WHAT HIS POSITION WOULD BE ONE SECURITY COUNCIL IS CONVENED.

5. MUGABE ASKED WHY THE U.S. WAS TALKNG SUCH AN ACTIVE PART IN THE PROCESS, WHEN INDEPENDENCE FOR ZIMBABWE WAS MATTER FOR THE BRITISH, AS THE COLONIAL POWER, AND THE ZIMBABWEAN PEOPLE TO SETTLE. I ACKNOWLEDGED THAT RHODESIA WAS A UK RESPONSIBILITY, BUT SAID THAT IT WAS IN INTEREST OF EVERYONE--UK, PATRIOTIC FRONT AND THE US--THAT MAJORITY RULE BE ESTABLISHED IN RHODESIA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AND THAT WE WERE COMMITTED TO DO WHAT WE COULD TO ACHIEVE THAT COMMON OBJECTIVE PEACEFULLY. I SAID THAT WE CONSIDERED THE CONFIDENTIAL

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UK PROPOSAL TO BE FAIR AND BALANCED AND WORTHY OF OUR SUPPORT. MUGABE SAID HE HAD NO QUARREL WITH THE US AND WAS CONVINCED PRESIDENT CARTER WAS TRULY COMMITTED TO MAJORITY RULE, BUT HE HOPED WE WOULD NOT STICK WITH THE BRITISH NO MATTER WHAT, SINCE HE WAS NOT CONFIDENT THAT THE BRITISH WERE REALLY PREPARED TO TURN OVER POWER TO THE ZIMBABWEAN PROPLE. IT WAS FOR THIS REASON, HE SAID, THAT HE OBJECTED TO GIVING THE UN RESIDENT COMMISSIONER SUCH ABSOLUTE POWERS DURING THE TRANSITION PERIOD.

6. I TOLD MUGABE THAT I HAD ALREADY SENT TO WASHINGTON THE TEXT OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT STATEMENT THAT HE HAD RELEASED TO THE PRESS THAT MORNING. I ASKED HIM IF HE PLANNED TO REMAIN IN MAPUTO IN THE EVENT I HAD INSTRUCTIONS TO SEE HIM WITH RESPECT TO THIS STATEMENT OR ON ANY OTHER MATTER. HE SAID HE WOULD BE IN MAPUTO FOR ANOTHER DAY, MAYBE TWO. HE DUD NOT VOLUNTEER WHERE HE WOULD GO FROM HERE.

7. JUST BEFORE LEAVING, I ASKED MUGABE IF HE HAD BEEN INFORMED OF THE US FOOD AID OFFER TO THE ZIMBABWEAN REFUGEES IN MOZAMBIQUE. HE HAD NOT, AND SEEMED TO BE VERY PLEASED

WHEN I MENTIONED WHAT WE WERE OFFERING TO DO. HE
SAID "THIS IS THE KIND OF SUPPORT WE LIKE TO SEE COMING FROM
THE US."

8. COMMENT. I BELIEVE MY CALL ON MUGABE SERVED TWO USEFUL
PURPOSES. FIRST, IT ENABLE US TO MAKE POINT THAT THE
DESIGNATION OF A UN REPRESENTATIVE DOES NOT COMMIT THE
PATRIOTIC FRONT IN ANY WAY TO THE PROPOSAL. MUGABE MAY NOT BE
ENTIRELY CONVINCED, BUT THERE PROBABLY LESS DANGER NOW THAT
HE WILL PEREMPTORILY REJECT CALL FOR SECURITY COUNCIL
MEETING WHEN REQUEST FOR SUCH MEETING BECOMES PUBLIC.
SECOND, MUGABE SAID THAT HE HOPED UK AND US WOULD BEGIN TO
SHOW MORE INTEREST IN PATRIOTIC FRONT VIEWS THAN WE HAD IN
PAST. MY CALL, APPRISING HIM OF UK/US INTENTIONS, GOES
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SMALL WAY TO CORRECT HIS IMPRESSION THAT WE ARE
NEGLECTING THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. I HAVE TOLD
UK AMBASSADOR LEWEN ABOUT MY CALL ON MUGABE. LEWEN PLANS TRY
ARRANGE MEETING BEFORE MUGABE LEAVES TOWN.
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